



# NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FLIGHT LOG

GOVERNOR JAMES E. MCGREEVEY



COMMISSIONER JACK LETTIERE



SUMMER 2004, No. 2

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## Governor McGreevey's airport preservation program takes wing

Governor James E. McGreevey's program to preserve key airports through the acquisition of development rights is now being used as a prototype by the Federal Aviation Administration and will soon go national.

"It is critical for us to preserve this \$4.6 billion sector of our economy whose activities support 70,000 jobs," McGreevey said.

New Jersey bases more than 4,000 aircraft and has 15,000 resident pilots. Studies indicate that as many as 70,000 jobs are related to New Jersey's general aviation activities.

Airport owners from Sussex to Salem counties are in negotiations with the State of New Jersey for the opportunity to participate in New Jersey's airport preservation program.

There are outstanding offers to purchase the development rights to three more airports: Sussex County Airport, Spitfire Aerodrome in Salem County and Alexandria Field in Hunterdon County.

Negotiations for the public purchase of Solberg Airport in Hunterdon County and Monmouth-Allaire Airport in Monmouth County are also under way.

"Public use airports are a precious commodity and purchasing airport development rights to preserve



Alexandria Field in Hunterdon County

them is a wonderful step," said Alexandria Field owner/operator Linda Castner.

In the southern part of the state, Spitfire CEO Jack Fetsko bought the airport three years ago at the age of 75 with the goal of making the facility among the best in the industry. He and the state are coming closer to terms for a development rights purchase.

Fetsko says he wants to keep Spitfire as an airport and sees selling development rights as a good solution to New Jersey's shrinking aviation infrastructure crisis. "I thought it was a great idea to preserve airports because sooner or later you're going to be tempted to sell [airport land] for non-airport purposes," Fetsko said.

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## New Jersey's air safety record improves

New Jersey's aircraft safety record continues to improve among the 15,000 pilots who make two million landings and takeoffs annually in 4,200 general aviation aircraft.

YEAR	Accidents/Incidents*	Fatalities
<b>2002</b>	61	8
<b>2003</b>	48	2
<b>2004</b> (6 months)	11	0

New Jersey Department of Transportation's Aviation Unit responds to all aircraft accidents/incidents and typically arrive on the scene before representatives of the National Transportation Safety Board or the Federal Aviation Administration.

\*Aircraft "incidents" are the equivalent of "fender-benders" – no one is injured and any damage is minor.

# 99s International Conference celebrates diamond anniversary

Mixing celebration and education, the New York-New Jersey Section of the 99s, the International Organization of Woman Pilots, welcomed women pilots from all over the world as the chapter hosted the organization's 2004 International Conference in Atlantic City July 6-11.

"New Jersey has never hosted an event like this, it was a real coup for our state," said conference chairperson Barbara Harris-Para, NJ chapter chairperson. "There was a huge amount of work to be done for this convention."

## 'Women at the Top' breakfast

The highlight of the conference for many was Thursday's keynote breakfast: "Women at the Top," a panel discussion featuring women at the top of a variety of fields in aviation.

Panelists included:

- **Brigadier General Jessica L. Wright**, Deputy Adjutant General—Army, Pennsylvania National Guard. She is a former Pennsylvania State Army Aviation Officer.
- **Dr. Anne Harlan**, Director of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) William J. Hughes Technical Center in Atlantic City. The Technical Center is one of the world's leading aviation engineering, research, development and testing facilities.

- **Susan Baer**, the first woman to manage an airport for The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Appointed General Manager of Newark Liberty International Airport in June 1998, Ms. Baer had been the General Manager of LaGuardia Airport.
- **Susan K. Timmons**, President of JRA Executive Air, Inc. in Hagerstown, MD. Ms. Timmons and a partner built their firm, which repairs damaged aircraft and offers the corporate aircraft market complete painting and interior refurbishments, from the ground up to a corporation with three separate facilities and nearly 25 employees.
- **Veronica Pacilio**, Manager of the Atlantic City Airport control tower.
- **Christine Greco**, Manager of the Human Resource Management Division of the Federal Air Marshal Service.

## Other highlights

Arlene Butler Feldman, the FAA's Eastern Regional Administrator, addressed the group on Saturday.

The 177th Fighter Wing Survival Course covered survival physiology, clothing, modern emergency signals, aviation survival equipment and preparation.

Attendees took a tour of the FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center, which serves as the national scientific test base for the FAA, showcased the facility's testing and evaluation in air traffic control, communications, navigation, airports, aircraft safety and security. They also got a look at the Center's capabilities in long-range development of innovative aviation systems and concepts and new air-traffic control equipment and software.

Other seminars included: Philadelphia Flight Standards, The Arts in Aviation, Airspace and GA Pilot, Women Take Flight, Flight Standards District Office Safety Seminar with Wings and the Pro 99s Program.

## Social Events

The 99s also celebrated their 75th anniversary at a variety of social activities including deep-sea fishing, golf outings, shopping on the Boardwalk, and winery tours.

Friday night's scholarship banquet and Saturday night's awards banquet capped off the festivities.



## From Commissioner Jack Lettiere

### New Jersey leads the way

New Jersey has an important place in the history of general aviation and is now becoming a national leader in preserving the future of general aviation. The permanent closure of general aviation airports is a nationwide problem. Solutions to this problem are being created right here in New Jersey.

Governor McGreevey made preserving and rehabilitating New Jersey's general aviation core system through airport preservation a transportation priority. Implementing the Governor's orders has made New Jersey the nation's leader for preserving airports. New Jersey is the only state to have successfully implemented a comprehensive program to save airports through the purchase of development rights.

Our progress has been rapid. Two New Jersey airports have already been saved through the purchase of development rights. By press time we will have made formal development rights purchase offers to another three airports and have started discussions with five others. Governor McGreevey's goal is to stop 50 years of continuous decline of New Jersey's critical air transportation infrastructure.

Our success has gained national attention. Congress recently passed legislation that creates a national program to save airports through the purchase of development rights. These innovations began in New Jersey.

Much credit and thanks goes to New Jersey's Congressional delegation and to aviation organizations like the Airport Operators and Pilots Association for bringing our airport preservation initiatives to the attention of the Federal Aviation Administration and for successfully supporting the creation of a national airport preservation program in Congress. I am hopeful that New Jersey's success will become a national model.

## NEW JERSEY FLIGHT LOG

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# Airports 'fuel' pilots and passengers with restaurants and snack bars

From vending machines to full service restaurants, New Jersey airports feature a variety of ways to refuel pilots and passengers while their planes take a rest. Here's a sample of the fare you can find at or near airports:

## **Blairstown Airport**

The Runway Café (908-362-9170) offers a clear view of the runways and aircraft taking off and landing on clear weekend days. The menu is basic American breakfast and lunch, with inexpensive food and an airplane stamp on the pancakes. Open daily 7 am to 6 pm.

## **Central Jersey Regional**

A short walk down the driveway from Central Jersey Regional is the popular Pizza 'n Pasta Restaurant (908-725-5522) at 930 South Main Street, Manville. The menu features a wide selection of pizzas baked in a wood-burning oven, plus a wide variety of other Italian favorites.

If you go in the other direction on South Main Street, you can find dozens of other restaurants and fast food services.

## **Cross Keys Airport**

The Cutaway (856-629-7553) is a restaurant located at the jump school. It is open weekends only and features Italian food.

## **Essex County Airport**

There are two restaurants nearby. The 94th Bomb Group (973-882-5660) is on the airport grounds and is open for dinner. The Tuscany Grill (973-808-7100), a tenth of a mile away, attracts local business people as well as the airport crowd and serves steaks, chops and burgers.

A half mile away, Napoleon's Restaurant (973-227-1773) is known for its large and varied menu. From the moment it opens at 6 am, it does a brisk carryout business among flight crew members and others.

## **Flying W Airport**

The Avion (609-267-8787) is a restaurant and lounge that offers an international menu in a comfortable atmosphere overlooking the runway. The Signature Sunday Brunch is an established tradition in the area. It is closed Mondays.

## **Lincoln Park Airport**

The Airport Cafe (973-686-0106) serves breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week, from 10 am to 10 pm, with karaoke on Wednesday nights and live music and entertainment Thursday through Sunday.

The Airport Cafe also features an outside dining terrace and party room. The Lincoln Park Pilots Association meets there every third Tuesday.

## **Little Ferry Seaplane Base**

Located adjacent to the dock is Tracey's Mine Mile House (201-440-1100). Its full service menu offers burgers, salads, steaks and chops in American and Italian styles. Tracey's is closed on Mondays.

## **Millville Municipal Airport**

Antino's Cornerstone Grille & Caterers (856-293-7771) replaced the Sunset Café a while back. The hamburgers, wraps, desserts and views of the runway get high marks.

The Flight Line Restaurant (856-825-3200) is also on the airport grounds and serves breakfast and lunch in the bacon-and-eggs and burgers-and-fries tradition.

## **Monmouth Executive Airport**

Runway 34 (732-919-2828) is a restaurant and deli that will open soon for lunch and dinner and deli take out. Call for hours.

## **Morristown**

Rod's 1890's Ranch House (973-539-6666) offers lunch and dinner and is only three miles from Morristown Municipal Airport. For those who want other choices, there are dozens of other restaurants within 15 miles of the airport.

## **Newark Liberty International Airport**

Newark, of course, has the biggest selection of eateries by far throughout terminals A, B and C.

## **Ocean City Municipal Airport**

The Airport Diner (609-399-3663) offers breakfast and lunch and closes at 3 pm.

## **Sky Manor Airport**

The Sky Manor Restaurant (908-996-3442) features inexpensive, well prepared family fare, attentive service and a kids' menu. In warm weather, there's lots of outdoor seating with good views of the runways – and peacocks. During the summer it's closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

## **South Jersey Regional Airport**

The Runway Café (609-518-0400) features house-made soups and wraps along with traditional breakfast fare and big burgers.

## **Sussex Airport**

The Airport Diner (973-702-0579) has a reputation for reasonably priced egg sandwiches and other home-style staples, plus a cheerful atmosphere. It's open Monday – Saturday 6 am to 3 pm and Sunday 7 am to 1 pm.

## **Trenton Mercer Airport**

The General's Quarters (609-883-4747) has a good reputation that goes back several decades. It's strategically placed to give diners a great view of the airfield.

## Airport preservation

Governor McGreevey's preservation program comes after an unbroken 50-year decline in the number of general aviation airports. In 1950 New Jersey had 82 public use airports; now there are only 48.

New Jersey's nationally recognized program preserves key airports through either their outright public purchase or through the purchase of their development rights. Sale of airport development rights to the State means

*Continued from page 1*

that the subject airport must remain an airport.

Purchase of development rights keeps airports under private ownership and management. Local officials support that initiative. It prevents sprawl and keeps the airports on local tax rolls, helping to keep property taxes in check.

Preservation discussions are now starting between the state and the owners of several other important public use airports.

## New Web site

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) recently launched a new aviation Web site on its njcommuter.com pages. The site provides the latest information for New Jersey pilots, airport managers, the public and links to other aviation web sites.

The Overview and Frequently Asked Questions sections describe NJDOT's role in aviation. The latest *New Jersey Airport Directory* is now online as is the latest issue of *Flight Log*.



# New Jersey Aviation Hall of Fame honors four World War II veterans

The New Jersey Aviation Hall of Fame inducted four veterans of World War II, who continued their contributions to aviation long after the war ended, at its annual dinner in May.

Michael Bachik Jr. of Morristown, William M. Fritsche of Pittstown, E.B. Berlinrut of Maplewood and Walter Szeeley of Rutherford were honored.

## Michael Bachik Jr., pilot and innovator

Pilots everywhere today depend on the autopilot and flight control systems that got their start in the innovations that followed World War II – and Michael Bachik played a role in their development.

As a test pilot and manager for Bendix Aviation at Teterboro Airport, Bachik helped develop and flight-test the first electronic autopilot and flight-path control systems. With Royal French Ryder in a B-25-J, he completed the very first Category III hands-off landing at the Federal Aviation Administration – National Aviation Facility Experimental Center in Atlantic City.

Bachik also worked on the flight path control yaw damper, the holding pattern programmer, Mico-Vision, the autopilot control system for the Alouette II helicopter. And before the first moon landing, he flight-tested the Gyro Stabilization Platform for Apollo II.

Bachik finished his career at Bendix as the managing director of Bendix International GmbH in Germany – equivalent to being president of an American corporation.

During the war, Bachik flew fuel supplies over the Himalayas in C-87 tankers.

## William M. Fritsche, love of land and air

During the decades when he ran Alexandria Field in Pittstown, ferried dignitaries like Bob Dole and Jack Kemp around the state and introduced more than a thousand people to the joys of flying, Bill Fritsche never quit farming.

He raised cattle and crops – not to mention a lot of pilots on that 170-acre dairy farm that also housed the flight school Fritsche ran under the GI Bill. Every takeoff started from a 1700-foot grass and gravel runway.

Over the years, Fritsche and his brother Paul built and maintained every building at the



Hall of Fame inductee Mannie Berlinrut, (left) one of the first aviation newspaper columnists in the nation, receives his bronze plaque from Jack Elliot, who wrote a weekly aviation column for the *Newark Star Ledger* for 38 years.

airport and improved the runways by themselves, including the hangars the two men picked up and hauled from Montgomeryville, PA and the Curtiss Wright airfield in Caldwell. In the early 1960s, Fritsche picked up an air taxi certificate and began hauling celebrities around the state including football great Don Meredith. Fritsche also formed State Line Aviation with mechanic Peter Kluber as the maintenance operation of the airfield.

During the war, he was a flight instructor in Douglas, GA, flying PT-17s.

## E.B. “Mannie” Berlinrut, the early decades of civil aviation

When Mannie Berlinrut accepted a commission in the Army Air Corps in 1942, he had already been writing about flying and its developing role in society for more than a decade.

As an aviation reporter and columnist for the *Newark Sunday Call*, then the largest Sunday newspaper in the state, Berlinrut's beat was Newark Airport, then the busiest in the world.

The 13 years he covered that beat were among the most significant in aviation's history. It was a time when the field metamorphosed from little more than a curiosity to a viable industry and vital component of American transportation.

Berlinrut wrote about every historic aviation event of the period, interviewing and covering the giants of the early years: Charles Lindbergh, Amelia Earhart, Richard Byrd, Clarence Chamberlin, James Doolittle, Eddie Rickenbacker, Howard Hughes and more.

But Berlinrut was more than a passive observer of aviation. He was also one of the field's

greatest boosters. From his free classes for children and young adults at Newark's Halsey Street YMCA to his weekly tabloid page for model builders of all ages to his postwar career in public relations for Douglas Aircraft (now part of Boeing) and the Rand Corporation, the think tank of the Air Force, he actively promoted aviation and its people in myriad ways.

Berlinrut founded the Associated Glider Clubs of New Jersey and was a founding member of the Aviation Writers of America. He also served as president of the Newark Newspaper Guild.

## Walter Szeeley, the face of valor

Before Walter Szeeley flew a single mission in World War II, he had already flown airplanes over Antarctica.

Szeeley, a pilot trainee in the Navy in the late 1930s, volunteered for Admiral Richard E. Byrd's last Antarctica expedition as soon as he got his wings, then flew several of the planes the expedition took with them on the wooden sailing ship U.S.S. Bear.

When war came, Szeeley transferred from the Navy to the Army Air Corps as a second lieutenant and, in P-47s, flew 85 combat missions over North Africa, Sicily and Italy. Those missions and more earned him a chestful of awards: the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

After the war, Szeeley earned a promotion to captain in the newly formed Air Force and flew F-80 jets in Korea for two years, taking home the Korean Service Medal.

# Eagle Flight Squadron teaches life skills to promising youths

From its beginnings in 1975 as a high school aviation club, the Eagle Flight Squadron in East Orange has become a door to the future for many teens from low income families.

"Set your sights high," founder Reverend Russell R. White tells the Squadron cadets who wear U.S. Air Force flight uniforms and fly out of Essex County Airport. As much as he and his cadets love aviation, the program drives home a bigger point to participants and their peers – if young people discipline and apply themselves, their potential is limitless.



Reverend Russell R. White, founder of Eagle Flight Squadron in East Orange

"Before I ask a student about flying, I ask about grades," said White. "Every student has to earn a place in this program with good grades and self-discipline."

“Every student has to earn a place in this program with good grades and self-discipline.”

"Eagle Flight Squadron, Inc. is working hard to ensure that our youth have the opportunity for personal growth and development," White said. He was inducted into the Teterboro Aviation Hall of Fame for his Eagle Flight Squadron work.

Eagle Flight Squadron graduates have been accepted into America's top colleges and universities and have gone on to become airline pilots, lawyers and professionals in numerous fields.

The Squadron is a nonprofit organization that teaches youth from low income families the academic, technical, physical and self-discipline skills they need to work in the aviation industry. More than 500 youngsters have participated in the program since its inception.

*For more information about the Eagle Flight Squadron call (973) 674-3580, e-mail [crutech@comcast.net](mailto:crutech@comcast.net) or write to Eagle Flight Squadron, 410 Springdale Avenue, East Orange, NJ 07017.*

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# NEW JERSEY FLIGHT LOG

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## Mystery-Pix

Can you guess which airport is pictured here? Answer in next issue.



### Last issue's Mystery-Pix

Our last Mystery-Pix was the former Manahawkin Airport on Route 72 near Long Beach Island. This popular airport was particularly active in the summer months. It closed in the early 1990s to make way for a shopping center.

### This issue

This airport served a substantial number of based aircraft and was a popular destination because of its restaurant. It closed before enactment of legislation allowing the state to preserve airports through the purchase of development rights.

The answer will be in the next Flight Log.

Got an interesting NJ aviation picture? Send it to the Division for publication here.